



# CREATIVE EDGE

'A view from the edge gives the best perspective'

[www.creative-edge.eu](http://www.creative-edge.eu)

## Druid Theatre's award winning director Garry Hynes launches the Creative Edge project

In our last newsletter we mentioned that the Creative Edge project would officially launch in November 2012. The launch event was a great success.

On November 29th last year, the Druid theatre company's award winning director Garry Hynes launched the Creative Edge project in the Bank of Ireland Theatre at the National University of Ireland, Galway. At the launch, Garry Hynes pointed to the importance of projects such as Creative Edge saying: "The reason why initiatives like this are so important is that they actually formally recognise that life isn't divided up into something which is spiritual, or artistic, and something that is economic. It is the fusion of these two things that make for a really rich society".

Dr James Cunningham, Director of the Whitaker Institute outlined how Creative Edge aims to work on addressing the needs of the creative sector and a call was made for the active participation and engagement of creative sector businesses, groups and organisations in the project. Dr Cunningham said: "This work is built on addressing the needs of the creative sector, needs change and we want to keep abreast of those changes. We are therefore actively encouraging creatives to engage with us and with our project partner in the region – the Western Development Commission". Engaging with the project will help individual entrepreneurs or companies develop and learn, for example by opening up opportunities to engage with creative industries in Northern Ireland, Finland and Sweden, where the Creative Edge project partners are located.

*Creative Edge partners from the Whitaker Institute, National University of Ireland Galway, the Western Development Commission and South East Economic Development at the launch*



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This edition of the Creative Edge newsletter takes a look at some broader creative economy issues, which includes examining relevant reports and a consideration of how to define the creative sector.

## Projected social, economic and cultural impacts of Galway's Picture Palace

The Picture Palace, a creative space to contain three cinemas, a shop, café, bar and online film archive, is due to open in Galway city towards the end of 2013. The Picture Palace aims to showcase what is great in cinema, from the classics, to new independent and Irish film.

Dr Patrick Collins, of the Whitaker Institute at NUI Galway, Ireland recently carried out a projected impact assessment of the Picture Palace venture on the Galway city and region.

The Picture Palace's expected economic impact is significant. The direct economic impact of the Picture Palace over five years is expected to be €2.5 million and indirect economic impact €2.2 million. The project has already created contract employment during its development phase and will also create employment for its staff when it opens later this year.

The Picture Palace will also have an important social and cultural role for the western region. It will work to promote cinema in schools at the primary and secondary level, and will run a Cineclub for the elderly and young families. The broader cultural impacts are also important, acting as a centre for the promotion of independent cinema in the west of Ireland, also encouraging local and regional film making.

The Picture Palace is sure to become a central part of the creative architecture of Galway and the wider western region in Ireland, supporting and fostering its already strong creative edge.

### Cinema seats

The Picture Palace will add a further 328 cinema seats to Galway. And with Ireland having one of the highest cinema admissions in the world, they won't stay empty for long. Also, our cinema going habits are getting stronger. In the impact assessment report, Dr Collins cites Galway Film Society figures showing an 8.7% increase in audience numbers in 2011.



**PICTURE PALACE**  
PÁLÁS NA bPICTIÚR

The Picture Palace project is currently being developed and is looking at funding sources to sustain and develop the venture into the future. It has charitable status and can accept donations through its website. For more information on the Picture Palace, the website also features images as the project has developed from concept to construction.

[www.picturepalace.ie](http://www.picturepalace.ie)

## Nordic craft and design exhibitions at Ireland's National Craft Gallery in Kilkenny

The Creative Edge project brings together partners from Ireland and Northern Ireland, and the Nordic countries of Sweden and Finland. Two exhibitions at the National Craft Gallery are another example of creative collaboration between Ireland and the Nordic countries.

As part of its 2013 programme exploring the legacy of Kilkenny Design Workshops in the 21st century, the National Craft Gallery featured two contemporary Nordic exhibitions, from Norway and Finland, running from March to May, in association with the Norwegian Embassy and the Finnish Embassy in Ireland. 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Kilkenny Design Workshops, the visionary agency that emerged in response to the 1961 Scandinavian Report on Irish design.

The exhibitions offer an opportunity to explore contemporary Nordic craft and design and the Scandinavian aesthetic at close quarters. The Norwegian artists in the exhibition cross a range of disciplines and generations, but are linked by their abilities to combine craft traditions with new concepts, synthesising tradition with innovation. 'Paradigm' offers an opportunity to explore the thinking processes of the makers involved, and is a wider introduction to contemporary Norwegian craft. The Finnish design exhibition 'Views on Clay' was shown in the Design Museum Helsinki in 2012, as part of the Helsinki World Design Capital Program. The concept involved gathering a group of designers and inviting them to work with clay in whatever way they chose. For some, this was an opportunity for creative expression, for others it was a chance to investigate their design process in a new medium.



The National Craft Gallery was established by the Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000. It plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture. The gallery exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process.

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)

The Craft Council of Ireland is the main champion of the craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. The Craft Council of Ireland is an associate partner of the Creative Edge project.

[www.ccoi.ie](http://www.ccoi.ie)

## Defining creative industries

Designers, film producers, artists and photographers. These are some of the areas that can come to mind with the mention of creative industries. But creative industries amount to much more than this and are hard to define in a few words. Their definition is also a subject of debate. As part of Work Package II of the Creative Edge project, the definition question around creative industries has been considered.

A dynamic and changing sector, creative industries can be explained differently, for example depending on what region or country's creative industry is being focused on. One explanation of creative industries can be found in the 2008 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report 'The challenge of assessing the Creative Economy: Towards informed policymaking'. UNCTAD define creative industries as:

“Creative industries are both knowledge intensive, and labour intensive, especially those with a high concentration of creative inputs, as occurs, for example, in theatre or film production. The contribution of the creative industries to employment is usually significant; typically, they account for around 2 to 8 per cent of the workforce in the economy”.

So, creative industries make an important contribution to employment. New ideas, knowledge and creativity are fundamental to the products of the creative industry and how it generates wealth. Creative industries use creativity in different ways. Some apply it, others express it. For example, creative industries that apply creativity, and produce a product or service, are businesses such as in the art trade, antiques trade, architecture, fashion, publishing, advertising and crafts.

Other businesses' creativity emerges through the expression of creativity such as music, visual arts, performing arts, video, film, photography, radio and TV broadcasting. These kinds of activities are what are more traditionally associated with creative industries.

Businesses that may not traditionally be associated with creativity are also part of the sector. For example technology based businesses, such as software developers, game developers, graphic designers and web designers, are all an important part of creative industries.

Considering how we define creative industries helps us understand the key elements of the sector. When attempting to classify creative industries, it also becomes clear there is overlap and potential synergy between different sectors. For instance, many non technology based creative companies rely on technology in their business activities.

Finally, after considering aspects of how creative industries can be defined, there is clearly one essential aspect to what makes an industry creative – that is human creativity. This is a resource that is everywhere, making creative industries a sector that all people and places can capitalise on.

As part of Work Package II, the Creative Edge project has developed a definition of the creative industries that will be included in the policy toolkit for the project. From the perspective of policy development, considering how creative industries are defined is important. From our consideration of how to define the sector, for example, it has emerged that human creativity is a resource we all hold and policy needs to develop ways to harness this.

## Nesta's Creative Economy Manifesto

The UK organisation Nesta published 'A Manifesto for the Creative Economy' in April. The Manifesto's recommendations focus on helping the UK creative industry to stay competitive in global markets.

While the UK's creative sector is strong, the manifesto report highlights the need to develop its capacity relating to digital technology. In doing this, one general recommendation given is that teenagers have the opportunity to learn creative digital skills, such as designing apps and games, delivered as part of a fusion in the curriculum covering technology, art, maths, science and the humanities.

The report outlines ten policy recommendations to bolster the UK's creative industries. Recommendations span areas such as: education, research and development, regulation of online markets and arts funding.

Among the specific recommendations are that policymakers should establish a 'creative innovation system' framework within which strategic priorities can be addressed in a coherent and effective manner. As well as this, it is recommended that research and development tax relief should be more accessible to creative businesses.

Another recommendation is that funders should incentivise experimentation with digital technologies by arts and cultural organisations and allocate a sustained percentage of their resources to digital research and development, ensuring that the evidence arising from this work is openly shared.

One outcome of Work Package II of the Creative Edge project will be the design of a policy toolkit that can be part of the models informing local, regional and national policy development. This report, which is based on the UK context, can help to inform the toolkit's development.



Lara Croft ©Square Enix Ltd

Nesta is an independent charity with a mission to help people and organisations bring great ideas to life. The creative economy is one of its areas of work, and further publications can be found on the Nesta website.

[www.nesta.org.uk](http://www.nesta.org.uk)

## Creative Edge Activities Update

The Creative Edge project received €1.1 million in funding through the European Union's Interreg initiative under the Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) and brings together universities, development agencies and industry bodies from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Finland and Sweden. The main objective of the project is to promote the active participation of local creative organisations and businesses in global markets while also aiding them in their ability to attract and utilise local emerging creative talent in these markets. Some recent and planned activities of the project are as follows:

- Operational committee and steering committee meetings were held in March in Sligo, Ireland.
- An industry advisory group meeting was held in March in Sligo, Ireland
- The Creative Steps workshops ran in January and February.
- The Creative Summit is due to be held in Skellefteå, Sweden on June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

Our forthcoming newsletters will focus on the many innovative activities taking place as part of Creative Edge, such as the online export platform MyCreativeEdge, the Mentoring Programme, Creative Steps and the Creative Hub.

*Creative Edge project partners and industry advisory group members in Sligo*



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